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HOW TO PROSECUTE AND HOW TO END THE WAR.

S P E E C H

OF

MAJ.-GEN. BENJAMIN F. BUTLER,

AT THE

ACADEMY OF MUSIC,

THURSDAY EVENING, APRIL 2, 1863.

The magnificent assemblage of the choicest of the city, which gathered on Thursday evening, April 2, in the Academy of Music, to greet the hero of the Gulf, has seldom been paralleled in the history of this continent. The house was completely filled in every part long before the hour of commencement. While waiting for that hour—

Major-Gen. Wool, upon advancing to take his seat on the platform, was recognized by the audience, and greeted with applause, which he acknowledged in a few firm and patriotic words.

At 7 1-2 o'clock precisely Senator Morgan, accompanied by several gentlemen, conducted Gen. Butler upon the stage. Immediately there began a cry of enthusiasm and a scene of excitement which very few people in this city have witnessed. With the thunders of applause, shouts of admiration, waving of hats, bouquets and handkerchiefs, the whole interior of the Academy except the roof was alive and in motion. For several minutes this continued. At last, when it had partially subsided, Senator Morgan presented Gen. Butler to the Mayor. The presentation was but a pantomime, for the cheering was yet so great that the Senator's words could not be heard.

The Mayor then welcomed Gen. Butler, in an exceedingly pertinent and happy address, which was enthusiastically received,—the General, who was in citizen's dress, standing the while. When the Mayor had concluded—

Gen. BUTLER advanced, and, after the tumultuous applause with which he was again greeted had subsided, he said:

Mr. Mayor, with the profoundest gratitude for the too flattering commendation of my administration of the various trusts committed to me by the Government, which, in behalf of your associates, you have been pleased to tender me. I ask you to receive my most heartfelt thanks. To the

citizens of New York here assembled in kind appreciation of my services supposed to have been rendered to the country, I tender the deepest acknowledgments [Applause.] I accept it all, not for myself, but for my brave comrades of the Army of the Gulf. [Renewed applause.] I receive it as an earnest of your devotion to the country, an evidence of your loyalty to the constitution under which you live and under which you hope to die. In order that the acts of the Army of the Gulf may be understood, perhaps it would be well, at a little length, with your permission, that some detail should be given to the thesis upon which we administered our duties. The first question then to be ascertained is, What is this contest in which the country is engaged? At the risk of being a little tedious, at the risk even of calling your attention to what might seem otherwise too elementary, I propose to run down through the history of the contest to see what it is that the whole country is about at this day and this hour. That we are in the midst of civil commotion, all know. But what is that commotion? Is it a riot? Is it an insurrection? Is it a rebellion? Or is it a revolution? And pray, sir, although it may seem still more elementary, What is a riot? A riot, if I understand it, is simply an outbreak of the passion of men for the moment in breach of the law, to be put down and subdued by the civil authorities; if it goes further, to be dealt with by the military authorities. But you say, sir, "Why treat us to a definition of a riot upon this occasion? Why, of all things, should you undertake to instruct a New York audience in what a riot is?" [Laughter.] To that I answer, because the Administration of Mr. Buchanan dealt with this great change of affairs as if it were a riot; because his Government officer gave the opinion that in Charleston it was but a riot; and as there was no civil authority there to call out the military, therefore Sumter must be given over to the rioters; and that was the beginning of this struggle. Let us see how it grew up. I deal not now in causes but in effects—in facts. Directly after the guns of the Rebels had turned upon Sumter, the various States of the South, in Convention assembled, inaugurated a series of movements which took out from the Union divers States; and as each was attempted to be taken out, the riot was

no longer found in them, but they became insurrectionary; and the Administration, upon the 15th of April, 1861, dealt with it as an insurrection, and called out the militia of the United States to subdue an insurrection. I was called at that time into the service, to administer the laws in putting down an insurrection. I found a riot at Baltimore. They burned bridges; but they had hardly arisen to the dignity of an insurrection, because the State had not moved as an organized community. A few men were rioting at Baltimore; and as I marched there at the head of United States troops, the question came up before me, what have I before me. You will remember that I offered then to put down all kinds of insurrections so long as the State of Maryland remained loyal to the United States. Transferred from thence to a wider sphere at Fortress Monroe, I found that the State of Virginia through its organization had taken itself out of the Union, and was endeavoring to erect for itself an Independent Government; and I dealt with that State as being in rebellion, and thought the property of the Rebels, of whatever name or nature, should be dealt with as rebellious property and contraband. [Great applause.]

I have been thus careful in stating the various steps, because, although through your kindness replying to eulogy, I am here answering every charge of inconsistency and wrong of intention for my acts done before the country. Wrong in judgment I may have been, but, I insist, wrong in intention or inconsistent, never. Upon the same theory upon which I felt myself bound to put down insurrection in Maryland while it remained loyal, whether that insurrection consisted of blacks or whites, by the same loyalty to the Constitution and laws I felt bound to confiscate slave property in the rebellious State of Virginia. [Applause.] Pardon me, sir, if right here I say that I am a little sensitive upon this subject. I am an old-fashioned Andrew Jackson Democrat of twenty years' standing. [Applause. A voice: "The second hero of New Orleans." Renewed applause, culminating in three cheers.] And so far as I know, I have never swerved, so help me God, from one of his teachings. [Great applause.] Up to the time that disunion took place, I went as far as the furthest in sustaining the constitutional rights of the States, however bitter or however distasteful to me were the obligations my fathers had made for me in the compromises of the Constitution, and among them it was not for me to pick out the sweet from the bitter; and, fellow-Democrats, I took them all [loud cheers], because they were constitutional obligations [applause]; and, taking them all, I stood by the South, and by Southern rights under the Constitution, until I advanced and looked into the very pit of disunion, and not liking the prospect I quietly withdrew. [Immense applause and laughter.] And we were from that hour apart, and how far apart you can judge when I tell you that on the 28th December, 1860, I shook hands on terms of personal friendship with Jefferson Davis, and on the 28th December, 1862, I had the pleasure of reading his proclamation that I was to be hanged at sight. [Great applause and laughter.] And now, my friends, if you will allow me to pass on for a moment in this line of thought, as we come up to the point of time when their men laid down their constitutional obligations: What were my rights, and what were theirs? At that hour they repudiated the Constitution of the United States, by solemn vote in solemn convention; and not

only that, but they took arms in their hands, and undertook by force to rend from the Government what seemed to them the fairest portion of the heritage which my fathers had given to me as a rich legacy to my children. When they did that, they abrogated, negated, and forfeited every constitutional right, and released me from every constitutional obligation. [Loud cheers.] And when I was thus called upon to say what should be my action with regard to slavery, I was left to the natural instincts of my heart, as prompted by a Christian education in New England, and I dealt with it accordingly, as I was no longer bound. [Immense applause.] Then I undertook earnestly and respectfully to maintain, with the same sense of duty to my constitutional obligations and to State rights, so long as they remained under the Constitution, that required me to support the system of slavery—and the same sense of duty and right, after they had gone out from under that Constitution, caused me to follow the dictates of my own conscience untrammeled. [Cheers.] So, my friends, you see, however mis-judging I may have been—and I speak to my old Democratic friends—I claim we went along, step by step, up to that point, and we should still go along, step by step; for, except the right to hold slaves was made a part of the compromises made by our fathers in the Constitution, and if their State rights were to be respected because of our allegiance to the Constitution and our respect to State rights, yet, when that sacred obligation was taken away, and we as well as the negroes were disenthralled, why should not we follow the dictate of God's law and humanity! [Tremendous applause, and cries of "Bravo, Bravo."] By the exigencies of the public service, removed once more to another sphere of action, at New Orleans, I found this problem to come up in another form, and that led me to examine and see how far had progressed this civil commotion, now carried on by force of arms. I found, under our complex system of States and an independent government, and the United States covering all, that there can be treason to the State and not to the United States, and revolution in the State and not as regards the United States, and loyalty to the State and disloyalty to the Union, and loyalty to the Union and disloyalty to the organized government of the State. And, as an illustration, take the troubles which almost lately arose in the State of Rhode Island, where there was an attempt to rebel against the State government, and to change the form of State government. All of you are familiar with the movements of Mr. Dorr; there was no intent of disloyalty against the United States, but a great deal against the State government. I, therefore, in Louisiana, found a State government that had entirely changed its form, and had revolutionized itself so far as she could; created courts and imposed taxes; and I found, so far as this State government was concerned, it was no longer in and of itself one of the United States of America. It had, so far as it could, changed its State government, and by solemn act had forever seceded from the United States of America, and attempted to join the Confederate States; and I found, I respectfully submit, a revolutionized State! There had been a revolution beyond an insurrection and infraction of the law; beyond the abnegation and setting aside of the law, and a new State government formed, that was being supported by force of arms.

Now, upon what thesis shall I deal with these people? Organized into a community under forms

of law, they had seized a portion of the territory of the United States; and I respectfully submit I must deal with them as alien enemies. [Great applause.] They had forever passed the boundary of wayward sisters [great laughter and applause], unless indeed they erred as Cain did against his brother Abel. They had passed beyond that and outside of that. Aye, and Louisiana had done this in the strongest possible way, for she had seized on territory which the Government of the United States had bought and paid for. Therefore I dealt with them as alien enemies. [Applause.] And what rights have alien enemies captured in war? They have the right, so long as they behave themselves and are non-combatants, to be free from personal violence; they have no other rights; and, therefore, it was my duty to see to it, and I believe the record will show, I did see to it. [Great applause and loud cheers.] "I did see to it that order was preserved, and that every man who behaved well, and did not aid the Confederate States, should not be molested in his person. I held everything else that they had was at the mercy of the conqueror [cheers]; and to give you an idea of it, permit me to state the method in which their rights were defied by one gentleman of my staff. He very coolly paraphrased the Dred Scott decision, and said they had no rights which a negro was bound to respect. [Loud and prolonged laughter and cheers.] And dealing with them, I took care to protect all men in personal safety. Now I heard a friend behind me say, But how did that affect loyal men? The difficulty with that proposition is this: in governmental action the Government, in making peace and carrying on war, cannot deal with individuals, but with organized communities, whether organized wrongly or rightly [cheers], and all I could do, so far as my judgment taught me, for the loyal citizen, was to see to it that no vexation should be put upon him. No property should be taken away from him that was not absolutely necessary for the success of military operations. I know nothing else that I could do. I could not alter the carrying on of the war, because loyal citizens were, unfortunately, like Dog Tray, found in bad company [laughter]; and to their persons, and to their property, even, all possible protection I caused to be afforded. But let me repeat—for it is quite necessary to keep it in mind, and I am afraid that the want of this is why some of my old Democratic friends have got lost, in getting from one portion of the country to the other, in their thoughts and feelings—let me repeat that, in making war or making peace, carrying on governmental operations of any sort, governments and their representatives, so far as I am instructed, can deal only with organized communities, and men must fall or rise with the communities in which they are situated. You in New York must follow the Government, as expressed by the will of the majority of your State, until you can revolutionize against that Government; and those loyal at the South must, until this contest comes into process of settlement, also follow the action of the organized majorities in which their lot has been cast; and no man, no set of men, can see the solution of this or any other governmental problem, as effecting States, except upon this basis. Now, then, to pass from the particular to the general, to leave the detail in Louisiana, which I have run down the account of rather as illustrating my meaning than otherwise, I come to the proposition, What is the contest with all the States that are banded together in the so called Confederate States? Into what form has it come? It started in insurrection; it

grew up a rebellion; it has become a revolution, and carrying with it all the rights of a revolution. And our Government has dealt with it upon that ground. When they blockaded their ports, they dealt with it as a revolution; when they sent out cartels of exchange of prisoners, they dealt with these people no longer as simple insurrectionists and traitors, but as organized revolutionists, who had set up a government for themselves upon the territory of the United States. Let no man say to me, sir, let no man say to me, "why then you acknowledge the rights of revolution in these men?" I beg your pardon, sir; I only acknowledge the fact of revolution—what had happened. I look these things in the face, and I do not dodge them because they are unpleasant; I find this a revolution, and these men are no longer, I repeat, our erring brethren, but they are our alien enemies, foreigners [cheers] carrying on war against us, attempting to make alliances against us, attempting to get into the family of nations. I agree, not a successful revolution, and a revolution never to be successful [loud cheers]; pardon me, I was speaking of a matter of law,—never to be successful until acknowledged by the parent State. And now, then, I am willing to unite with you in your cheers when you say, a revolution which we never will acknowledge. [Cheers.] Why, sir, have I been so careful in bringing down with great distinctness these distinctions? Because, in my judgment, there are certain logical consequences following from them as necessarily as various corollaries from a problem in Euclid. If we are at war, as I think, with a foreign country to all intents and purposes, how can a man here stand up and say he is on the side of that foreign country and not be an enemy? [Cheers.] A man must be either for his country or against his country. [Cheers.] He cannot be throwing impediments all the time in the way of the progress of his country under pretense that he is helping some other portion of his country. If a man thinks that he must do something to bring back his erring brethren, if he likes that form of phrase, at the South, let him take his musket and go down and try it in that way. [Cheers.] If he is still of a different opinion, and thinks that is not the best way to bring them back, but he can do it by persuasion and talk, let him go down with me to Louisiana, and I will set him over to Mississippi, and if the Rebels do not feel for his heartstrings, but not in love, I will bring him back. [Cheers, loud and prolonged. "Send Wood down first!"] Let us say to him: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. If the Lord thy God be God, serve him; if Baal be God, serve ye him." [Cheers.] But no man can serve two masters, God and Mammon. ["That's so."] Again, there are other logical consequences to flow from this view which I have ventured to take of this subject, and that is with regard to past political action. If they are now alien enemies, I am bound to them by no ties of party fealty. They have passed out of that, and I think we ought to go back a moment and examine and see if all ties of party allegiance and party fealty as regards them are not broken, and that I am now to look simply to my country and to its service, and leave them to look to the country they are attempting to erect and to its service, and then let us try the conclusion between us. Mark, by this I gave up no territory of the United States. Every foot that was ever circumscribed on the map by the lines around the United States belongs to us. [Applause.] None the less because bad

men have attempted to organize worse Government upon various portions of it. And it is to be drawn in under our laws and our Government as soon as the power of the United States can be exerted for that purpose; and therefore, my friends, you see the next set of logical consequences that must follow: that we have no occasion to carry on the fight for the Constitution as it was. [Cheers.] I beg your pardon, the Constitution as it is. Who is interfering with the Constitution as it is? Who is interfering with the Constitution! Who makes any attacks upon the Constitution? We are fighting with those who have gone out and repudiated the Constitution. [Cheers.] And now, my friends, I do not know but I shall use some heresy, but as a Democrat, as an Andrew Jackson Democrat, I am not for the Union as it was. [Great cheering, "Good!" "Good!"] I say, as a Democrat, and an Andrew Jackson Democrat, I am not for the Union to be again as it was. Understand me: I was for the Union as it was, because I saw, or thought I saw, the troubles in the future which have burst upon us; but having undergone those troubles, having spent all this blood, and this treasure, I do not mean to go back again and be cheek by jowl with South Carolina as I was before, if I can help it. [Cheers. "You're right."] Mark me now, let no man misunderstand me, and I repeat lest I may be misunderstood—there are none so slow to understand as those who do not want to—mark me, I say I do not mean to give up a single inch of the soil of South Carolina. If I had been alive at that time, and had had the position, the will, and the ability, I would have dealt with South Carolina as Jackson did, and kept her in the Union at all hazards, but now she has gone out, and I will take care that when she comes in again she comes in better behaved [cheers]; that she shall no longer be the firebrand of the Union; aye, and that she shall enjoy, what her people never yet have enjoyed, the blessings of a Republican form of government. [Applause.] And, therefore, in that view, I am not for the reconstruction of the Union as it was. Yet I have spent treasure and blood enough upon it, in conjunction with my fellow-citizens, to make it a little better. [Cheers.] It was good enough if it had been left alone. The old house was good enough for me, but as they have pulled down all the L part, I propose, when we build it up, to build it up with all the modern improvements. [Prolonged laughter and applause.]

Another of the logical consequences, it seems to me, that follow with inexorable and not-to-be-shunned course upon this proposition that we are dealing with alien enemies, is in our duties with regard to the confiscation of their property; and that would seem to me to be easy of settlement under the Constitution, and without any discussion, if my first proposition is right. Has it not been held, from the beginning of the world down to this day, from the time the Israelites took possession of the Land of Canaan, which they got from alien enemies, has it not been held that the whole property of those alien enemies belonged to the conqueror, and that it has been at his mercy and his clemency what should be done with it? For one, I would take it, and give the loyal men who was loyal in the heart of the South enough to make him as well as he was before, and I would take the balance of it and distribute it among the volunteer soldiers who have gone—[the remainder of the sentence was drowned in a tremendous burst of applause.] And so far as I know them, if we

should settle South Carolina with them, in the course of a few years I should be quite willing to receive her back into the Union. [Renewed applause.] That leads us to deal with another proposition: What shall be done with the slaves? Here, again, the laws of war have long settled, with clearness and exactness, that it is for the conqueror, for the government which has maintained or extended its direction over the territory, to deal with slaves as it pleases, to free them or not as it chooses. It is not for the conquered to make terms, or to send their friends into the conquering country to make terms upon that subject. [Applause.] Another corollary follows from the proposition that we are fighting with alien enemies, which relieves us from another difficulty which seems to trouble some of my old Democratic friends; and that is in relation to the question of arming the negro slaves. If the States are alien enemies, is there any objection that you know of, and if so state it, to our arming one portion of the foreign country against the other while they are fighting us? [Applause, and cries of "No," "No."] Suppose that we were at war with England. Who would get up here in New York and say that we must not arm the Irish, lest they should hurt some of the English? [Applause.] At one time, not very far gone, all those Englishmen were our grandfathers' brothers. But we are now separate nations. There can be no objection, for another reason, because there is no international law, or any other law of government action that I know of, which prevents the country from arming any portion of its citizens; and if the slaves do not take part in the rebellion they become, simply, our citizens residing in our territory, which is at present usurped by our enemies. [Applause.] At this waning hour I do not propose to discuss but merely to hint at these various subjects. [Cries of "Go on."] There is one question I am frequently asked—"Why, General Butler, what is your experience? Will the negroes fight?" To that I answer, I have no personal experience, because I left the Department of the Gulf before they were fairly brought into action. But they did fight, under Jackson, at Chalmette. More than that: let Napoleon III answer, who has hired them to do what the veterans of the Crimea cannot do—to whip the Mexicans. Let the veterans of Napoleon I., under Le Cleve, who were whipped out from San Domingo, say whether they will fight or not. What has been the demoralizing effect upon them, as a race, by their contact with white men, I know not; but I cannot forget that their fathers would not have been slaves but that they were captives in war. And, if you want to know any more than that, I can only advise you to try them. [Great applause.]

Passing to another logical deduction from the principle that we are carrying on war against alien enemies, I meet the question, whether we thereby give foreign nations any greater rights than if we considered them as a Rebellious portion of our country. So far as the Rebels are concerned, they are estopped from denying that they are alien enemies; and so far as foreign nations are concerned, although they are alien to us, they are upon our territory, and until we acknowledge their independence there is no better settled rule in the law of nations than that foreign recognition of them is an act of war. And no country is more sternly bound to that view than is England, which held the recognition by France of our own independence to be an act of war, and declared war accordingly. What then is the duty

of neutrals? Let us take for example the English nation. They have no treaty with the Rebels, no open relations with them. They have treaties of amity and commerce with us. A contest arises between us and our enemies to whom they are strangers, and they claim to exercise the same neutrality as if the contest were between two nations with which they had treaties of amity. Let me illustrate: I have two friends who have got into a fight. I am on equally good terms with both, and do not choose to take part in their quarrel. I hold myself neutral. But suppose one of my friends is fighting with a stranger, of whom I know nothing that is good; I have seen nothing except that he would fight; is it my duty then to stand perfectly neutral? It is not the part of a friend as between men nor between nations. The English say, We will not sell you any arms, because we should have to sell the same to the Confederate States. To that I answer, you have treaties of commerce with us by which you agree to trade with us. You have no treaty of commerce with the Rebels. I insist that there is a greater duty to us, considering this as a separate nation—an interloper trying to get admitted into the family of nations. There is still another logical consequence which, in my judgment, follows from this view of the case. A great question put to me has been: "How are we to get those men back?—how are we to get this territory back?—how are we to reconstruct the Union?" I think that is much better answered upon this hypothesis than upon any other: There are but two ways in which this contest can be ended. One is by rerevolutionizing a given portion of this country, and having them ask to be admitted into the Union; the other is to bring it back by the triumphal car of victory. Whenever any portion of the inhabitants of the South shall become again a part of the Union, and shall erect themselves into a State and ask us to take them back with such a Constitution as they ought to be admitted with, there is no difficulty in its being done. There is no witchery about it. This precise thing has been done in Western Virginia. She went out, and stayed out for a while, by the aid of our armies, and by the efforts of her citizens, she rerevolutionized and threw off the Government of the rest of Virginia, and the Confederate yoke, erected herself into a State, with a Constitution which I believe is quite satisfactory to you, especially with the amendment, came back, and has been received again into the Union. This is the first, the entering wedge, of the series of States which will come back in that way. But if they will not come back, we are bound to subjugate them. What then do they become? Territories of the United States. [Applause.] We acquire them precisely as we acquired California and Nevada; not exactly as we acquired Texas. Was there any difficulty in dealing with the State of California? Will there be any difficulty in our admitting, as a new State, Nevada, when ready to come in and ripe to come in? Was there any difficulty in taking in a portion of the Louisiana purchase? Will there be any difficulty, when her people are ready, in our taking them back again? Will there be any difficulty in reconstructing the Union, when those that have gone out without cause, without right, without grievance, that have formed themselves into new States and taken upon themselves new alliances, are ready to return? I am not for taking them back without readmission. I feel as a husband might feel, whose wife had run away with another

man and divorced herself from him; I should be unwilling to take her again to my arms until we had gone before the priest and been remarried. I have the same feeling with regard to those people who have gone out. When they repent and come back, I am ready to receive them; but I am not ready till then. [Applause.]

To your flattering allusions, sir, to my acts in the Department of the Gulf, I will answer a single word. When I left that Department, I sat down deliberately, and put in the form of an address to the people of that Department an exact account of the acts I had done while there, and I said to them: You know I have done these things; no man can deny it. I have waited more than three months, and I have not yet heard any denial from that Department that those things were done. To that fact I point as the justification of your too flattering eulogy, as an answer forever to every slander and every calumny. The ladies of New Orleans knew whether they were safe. Has any one of them ever said she was not? The men of New Orleans knew whether their life and property were safe. Has any man ever said it was not? The poor of New Orleans know whether the money that was taken from the rich rebels was fed out to them. Has any one of them denied it? [Applause.] To that record I point as the only answer I shall ever make to the calumnies that have been poured upon me, and upon the officers everywhere in that Department that aided so successfully in carrying out every effort for the good of the country. [Applause.] I desire now to say a single word upon the question, What are the prospects of this war? My opinion would be no better than that of another man; but let me show you the reason for the faith that is in me, that this war is progressing steadily to a successful termination. Compare the state of the country on January 1, 1863, with the state of the country on January 1, 1862, and tell me whether there has not been progress. At that time the Union armies held no considerable portion of Missouri, of Kentucky, or of Tennessee; none of Virginia except Fortress Monroe and Arlington Heights; none of North Carolina save Hatteras, and none of South Carolina save Port Royal. All the rest was ground of struggle at least, and all the rest furnishing supplies to the rebels. Now they hold none of Missouri, none of Kentucky, none of Tennessee for any valuable purpose of supplies, because the western portion is in our hands, and the eastern portion has been so run over by the contending armies that the supplies are gone. They hold no portion of Virginia valuable for supplies, for that is eaten out by their armies. We hold one third of Virginia, and half of North Carolina. We hold our own in South Carolina, and I hope that before the 11th of this month we shall hold a little more. [Applause.] We hold two thirds of Louisiana in wealth and population. We hold all Arkansas and all Texas, so far as supplies are concerned, so long as Farragut is between Port Hudson and Vicksburg. [Applause.] And I believe the colored troops hold Florida at the last accounts. [Applause.] The rebellion is reduced to the remainder of Virginia, part of North Carolina, the larger part of South Carolina, all of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, and a small portion of Louisiana and Tennessee—Texas and Arkansas, as I said before, being cut off. Why I draw strong hopes from this is that their supplies all came either from Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, Arkansas, or Texas, and these are completely now beyond their reach. To that I look largely for the suppression

of this rebellion, and the overthrow of this revolution. They have got to the end of their conscription; we have not begun ours. They have got to the end of their national credit; we have not put ours in any market in the world. [Applause.] Why should we be impatient? The Revolutionary War lasted seven years. Nations at war ever move slowly. It has seemed strange to me that our Navy could not catch the steamer Alabama; but a friend reminded me that Paul Jones, with a sailing ship even, upon the coast of England, bid defiance to the whole British navy for many months; and that Lord Cochrane, with a single ship, held the whole French coast in terror. So that, if we will only have a little patience, and possess our souls with a little patriotism, we shall have no reason to complain.

But there is one thing, I say frankly, that I do not like the appearance of. I refer to the war made upon our commerce. It is not the fault of the Navy, or of any department of the Government; but it is the fault of our allies. Pardon me a moment, for I am speaking now to the merchants of New York, as this is a matter on which I have given some reflection. Pardon me while we examine to see what England has done. She agreed to be neutral. I tried to demonstrate to you that she ought to have been a little more. But has she been? [Cries of "No, no."] Let us see the evidence of that "No." In the first place, there has been nothing in the Union cause but what her orators and statesmen have maligned. There has been nothing we have done that has not been perverted by her press. There has been nothing of sympathy or encouragement which she has not afforded our enemies. There has been nothing which she could do under a cover of neutrality which she has not done to help Rebels. ["That is true."] Nassau has been a naval arsenal for private Rebel boats to refit in; Kingston has been a coal depot; and Barbadoes has been a dancing-hall to fete pirate chieftains in. [Great applause.] What cause, my friends, what cause, my countrymen, had she so to deal with us? What is the reason she has so dealt with us? Is it because we have never shown sympathy toward her or love to her people? and mark me here: I draw a distinct line between the English people, the masses, and the English Government. I think the heart of her people beats responsive to ours. [Great applause.] But I know her Government and her aristocracy hate us with a hate that passeth all understanding. [Loud cheers.] I say, let us see if we have given any cause for this: You remember when the famine overtook the Irishmen in 1847, and the Macedonian frigate carried bread to feed the poor when England was starving. And when her favored heir appeared here, in this very house, we assembled and gave him such a welcome as Northern gentlemen give to their friends, and his present admirers at Richmond gave him such a welcome as Southern gentlemen give to their friends. [Loud laughter and applause.] And the George Griswold has gone from the city of New York to feed the starving poor of Lancashire; and it was only by God's blessing that she was not overhauled and burned by the pirate Alabama, fitted out in an English port. [Applause.] Yet, to-day we hear that a steamer is being built at Glasgow for the Emperor of China [laughter and applause], and at Liverpool another one for the Emperor of China. But I don't believe the Emperor of China will buy many ships of Great Britain until they bring back the silks they stole from his palace at Pekin!

[Great laughter.] Now, I learn from the late correspondence of Earl Russell that the British have put two articles of the treaty of Paris in compact with the Rebels—first, that enemies' goods shall be covered by neutral flags, and there shall be free trade at the ports, and open trade with neutrals. Why didn't Great Britain put the other part of the treaty in compact, namely, that there should be no more privateering! if she was honest and earnest? Again, when we took from her deck our two Senators and Rebel Embassadors, Slidell and Mason, and took them, in my judgment, according to the laws of nations, what did she do but threaten us with war? I agree that it was wisely done, perhaps, not to provoke war at that time—we were not quite in a condition for it—but I thank God, and that always, that we are fast getting in a condition to remember that always and every day! [Tremendous applause, and waving of handkerchiefs, and cries of "Good!"] Why is it all this has been done? Because, we all, can be the commercial rival of Great Britain!

There has been, in my judgment, a deliberate attempt on the part of Great Britain, under the plea of neutrality, to allow our commerce to be ruined. [Cries of "That is so."] It is idle to tell me Great Britain does not know these vessels are fitted out in her ports. It is idle and insulting to tell you that she put the Alabama under \$20,000 bonds, not to go into the service of the Confederate States. We did not so deal with her when she was at war with Russia. On the suggestion of the British Minister, our Government stopped, with the rapidity of lightning, the sailing of a steamer, until the Minister himself was willing to let her go. We must take some means to put a stop to these proceedings. I was told the other day that the amount of property already destroyed would amount to \$9,000,000! What, then, is our remedy? The peaceful and proper remedy, for we must look forward to these matters. The Government is no doubt doing it; but we ourselves must look at it, for we are the people—we are the Government [applause]; and when our Government gets ready to take the step we must be ready to support it. England tells us what to do; when there was a likelihood of war she stopped the exploitation of those articles she thought we wanted. Let us do the same thing. [Great applause and loud cheers.] Let us proclaim non-intercourse, so that no ounce of food from the United States shall by any accident ever find its way into an Englishman's mouth until the piracy is stopped. [Applause and cries of "Good," and voice: "Let us hear that again."] I never say anything that I am afraid to say again, [Renewed applause.] I say again, let us proclaim non-intercourse, so that no ounce of food from America shall ever by any accident find its way to an Englishman's mouth until these piracies are stopped [great cheering, and cries of "This is so," and "Good!"]; and that we have a right to do. But I hear some objector say, If we proclaim non-intercourse England may go to war ["Let her go!"]; but I am not to be frightened twice running. [Laughter and applause.] I got frightened a little more than a year ago, but I have got over it. [Laughter.] It is a necessity, for we must keep our ships at home to save them from these pirates, if a dozen of them get loose upon the ocean. It becomes a war measure, which any nation under any law would have a right to enforce; and it should be made to apply directly to the English nation, for I never heard of a blockade runner under the French flag, or Russian, or

Austrian, or Greek flag—no, not even the Turks will do it. [Loud cheers and applause.] Therefore I have ventured to suggest this to you as a possible, aye, as a probable, remedy, unless this thing is seen to and stopped. We must see to it. We should protect ourselves, and take a manly place among the nations of the earth. [Loud applause.] But I hear some say that this will bring down the price of our provisions, and make our Western markets more depressed. Allow me to suggest that the exportation of gold be also prohibited, and then there would be nothing to meet our bills of exchange to pay for our goods but our provisions, and we could pay for our silks and satins in butter, lard, corn, beef, and pork, and if our fair sisters and daughters will wear silks, and satins, and laces, they will feel no trouble because a portion of the extra price goes to the Western farmer instead of going into the coffers of a Jew banker in Wall street. [Great applause and cries of "Good."]

You will observe, my friends, that in the list of grievances with which I charge England, I do not charge her with tampering with our "leading politicians." [Loud laughter.] So far as any evidence I have, I don't know that she is guilty. But what shall we say of our leading politicians who have tampered with her? [Great applause.] I have read that—which surprised me more than any other fact of this war—that here in New York leading politicians consulted with the British Minister as to how this Union should be separated; and when I read that, every drop of blood in my veins boiled, and I would have liked to have seen that "leading politician." [Most enthusiastic applause, the cheers being renewed again and again.] I don't know that Lord Lyons is to blame. I suppose, sir, if a man goes to one of your clerks, and offers to go into partnership with him to rob one of your neighbors, and he refuses and reports the matter to you, you don't blame your clerk; but what do you do with the man who makes the offer? [Great applause, and cries of "Hang him!"] I think we had better take a lesson from the Government of Washington's Administration, though the case is reversed. When the French Minister, Citizen Genet, undertook to make an address to the people of the United States, complaint was made to his Government and he was recalled; and a law was passed preventing for all time to come any interference of foreign ministers in the politics of the United States. I want to be understood: I have no evidence that Lord Lyons interfered at all, but the correspondence says that certain leading politicians of New York came to him and desired that he should do—what! That he would advise with his Government not to interfere! Why not? Because it would aid the country—they would spurn it, and would be stronger than ever to crush the Rebellion, and "we and our party shall be crushed out!" [Great laughter and cheers.] Mark the insidious point. They knew how the people felt against England. They knew the heart of this people to be true to the Constitution. They knew the people would not brook any interference from England, and they ask the British Minister to use the power of British diplomacy to get other nations to interfere, and Great Britain to keep out of sight lest we should see the cat under the meal. [Loud laughter.] I have used the phrase up to this moment, as you see, of "politician;" but what kind of politicians are they? [Cries of "Copperheads," "Traitors," from all over the house, amid great cheers.] Conservative politicians! [Loud laugh-

ter.] They can't be Democratic politicians. ["Of course they can't."] I should like to hear old Andrew Jackson say a few words about such politicians, who call themselves Democrats. ["He'd hang them."] No, my friend, I don't think he would hang them, I don't think he would ever catch them. [Laughter.] I have felt it my duty here and now, in the city of New York, from the interest I have in public affairs, to call attention to this most extraordinary matter. It is a matter which arrests the attention more than any other, to wit: that there are men so lost to patriotism, and so bound up in the traditions of party, and so selfish, as to be willing to tamper with Great Britain for the separation of this country! It is the most alarming fact that I have seen. I had rather see 100,000 men set in the field on the Rebel side,—aye, I had rather see Great Britain herself armed against us openly, if you please, as she has been covertly,—rather than to feel that there are men, lineal descendants of Judas Iscariot, and intermarried with Benedict Arnold, who would thus betray their country. [Loud cries of "Fernando Wood," with hisses and cheers. "He knows them all."] That has shown me the great danger—the only danger—we are in. I call upon true men to sustain the Government. [Great applause.] It is not a Government of my choice. I didn't vote for it, or any part of it; but it is the Government of my country; it is the only organ by which I can exert the force of the country and protect her integrity; and so long as I believe that action is honestly exerted, I will throw the mantle of charity over any mistakes I think I may see, and support it heartily with hand and purse so long as I live. [Applause.]

I have no loyalty to any man. My loyalty is to the Government [cheers, "That's it"]; and it makes no difference to me who the people have put into that Government, so long as it has been properly and constitutionally done. So long as they hold their seats and hold their power I am a traitor and a false man if I falter in that support. This is what I understand to be loyalty to the Government. [Cheers.] And I was sorry to hear the other day that there was a man in New York who professed not to know the meaning of the word. ["Who was it?" "Fernando Wood!"] I desire to say that it is the duty of every man to be loyal to the Government, to sustain the Government, to pardon its errors, to help rectify its mistakes, to press it on to everything that it may do for the country, and let it carry the country on in its course of glory and grandeur on which it was placed by our fathers; for let me say to you, my friends, yet young men, that no man yet has ever prospered who opposed his country in time of war. [Cheers.] The Tory of the Revolution, the Hartford Conventionist of 1812, the immortal Seven that voted against the supplies in the Mexican War, all history is against them. And let no politician put himself in the way of the march of this country to glory and greatness; for he will be crushed. Its course is onward and certain, and let him who opposes it beware;

"The mower mows on though the adder may writh,
And the Copperhead curl round the blade of the scythe."

[Tremendous applause.]

It only remains for me, sir, to thank you, and the citizens of New York here assembled, for the kind attention with which they have listened to me, and with which they have received me, for which please, again and again, accept my thanks.

[Loud and prolonged applause, and three cheers for Gen. Butler.]

Gen. Butler was immediately surrounded by the gentlemen on the stage, which was crowded with the leading men of the city, all of whom sought to present to him their thanks and congratulations. For many minutes the audience before the stage sat in a condition of expectancy. The band played "The Star-Spangled Banner," and "Yankee Doodle," and the Union Glee Club sang a song in praise of Gen. Butler.

Come friends who love freedom, and join in our song,
For Country and Union we're marching along;

The "Code" of our Butler has righted a wrong,
And under his banner we're marching along.

Chorus—

Marching along, we're marching along;
For our Flag and our Country we're marching along;
Let us cheer for our Butler and join in the song,
For treason was blighted where he marched along.

Our Army and Navy are moving along,
And our Volunteer Soldiers unit in our song;
They fight for our flag, it can suffer no wrong,
While Butler and Hooker are marching along.

In the West and the South we're marching along,
For the thunder of Farragut echoes our song;
And the veterans of Rosecrans eagerly throng
To join the glad chorus, We're marching along.

The Mayor then announced that the meeting was adjourned.

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